

Chastity: Love Versus Lust

Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (1972)

Section Three

Morality and Repentance

Chapter Fourteen

Chastity: Love Versus Lust

Across the desk sat a handsome nineteen-year-old and a beautiful, shy but charming, eighteen-year-old. They appeared embarrassed, apprehensive, near-terrified. He was defensive and bordering on belligerency and rebellion. There had been sexual violations throughout the summer and intermittently since school began, and as late as last week. I was not so much surprised. I have had these kinds of visits many times; but what did disturb me was that they seemed little, if any, remorseful. They admitted they had gone contrary to some social standards, but they quoted magazines and papers and speakers approving premarital sex and emphasizing that sex was a fulfillment of human existence.

Finally the boy said, "Yes, we yielded to each other, but we do not think it wrong because we love one another." I thought I had misunderstood him. Since the world began, there have been countless immoralities, but to hear them justified by Latter-day Saint youth shocked me. He repeated, "No, it is not wrong, because we love one another."

They had repeated this abominable heresy so often that they had convinced themselves, and a wall of resistance had been built, and behind this wall they stubbornly, almost defiantly, stood. If there had been blushes of shame at first, such had been neutralized with their logic, so deeply entrenched were they in this rationalization. Had they not read in some university papers of the new freedom where premarital sex was sanctioned, at least not forbidden? Did they not see the looseness in every show, on every stage, on TV screens and magazines? Had they not discussed this in the locker room and in private conversation? Had it not been fairly well established, then, that sex before marriage was not so wrong? Did there not need to be a trial period? How else could they know if they would be sexually compatible for marriage? Had they not, like numerous others, come to regard sex as the basis for living?

And a proverb came to my mind:

Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness. ([Proverbs 30:20.](#))

In their rationalization they have had much cooperation, for, as Peter said,

. . . there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies . . . and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways. . . . ([2 Peter 2:1-2.](#))

And here they are, false teachers everywhere, using speech and pornographic literature, magazines, radio, TV, street talk—spreading damnable heresies that break down moral standards, and this to gratify the lusts of the flesh.

The Savior said that the very elect would be deceived by Lucifer if it were possible. He will use his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black.

Young people are confused by the arch deceiver, who uses every device to deceive them.

This young couple looked up rather startled when I postulated firmly and with positiveness, "No, my beloved young people, you did not love one another. Rather, you lusted for one another."

I am sure that Peter and James and Paul found it unpleasant business to constantly be calling people to repentance and warning them of dangers, but they continued unflinchingly. So we, your leaders, must be everlastingly at it; if people do not understand, then the fault may be partly ours. But if we make the true way clear to you, then we are blameless; and most want to follow if they fully understand.

If when he [the watchman] seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. ([Ezekiel 33:3-6](#).)

The boy and girl sat still and respectfully. I was not sure if they were comprehending. After their wrong concepts had been bolstered so long and firmly, it was hard for them to change immediately.

They had defiled the beautiful and holy word *love* until it had degenerated to become a bedfellow with *lust*, its antithesis.

As far back as Isaiah, rationalizers were condemned:

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! ([Isaiah 5:20-21](#).)

As I looked the boy in the eye, I said, "No, my boy, you were not expressing love when you took her virtue." And to her I said, "There was no real love in your heart when you robbed him of his chastity. It was lust that brought you together in this most serious of all practices short of murder. Paul said, 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour. . . .'" ([Romans 13:10](#).)

I continued, "If one really loves another, one would rather die for that person than injure him. At the hour of indulgence, pure love is pushed out one door while lust sneaks in the other. Your affection has been replaced with biological materialism and uncontrolled passion. You have accepted the doctrine that the devil is so eager to establish—that sex relations are justified on the grounds that it is a pleasurable experience in itself and is beyond moral consideration.

"When the unmarried yield to the lust that induces intimacies and indulgence, they have permitted the body to dominate and have placed the spirit in chains. It is unthinkable that anyone could call this love. You have

ignored the fact that all situations or conditions or actions whose pleasures or satisfactions end with the termination of the act will never produce great peoples nor build great kingdoms.

"In order to live with themselves, people who transgress must follow one path or the other of two alternatives. The one is to sear the conscience and dull the sensitivity with mental tranquilizers so that the transgression may be continued; the other is to permit remorse to lead to total conviction, repentance, and eventual forgiveness."

Because of this widespread tolerance toward promiscuity, this world is in grave danger. When evil is decried and forbidden and punished, the world still has a chance. But when toleration for sin increases, the outlook is bleak and Sodom and Gomorrah days are certain to return.

We were in Los Angeles years ago when the news broke of the illicit affair of a certain movie actress, from which she became pregnant. Because of her popularity, it was big news in heavy headlines in every paper in the land. We were not so surprised at her adultery—it was reported to be common in Hollywood as well as in the world generally. But that such dissoluteness should be approved and accepted by society shocked me. The Los Angeles papers took a poll of the people—club women and ministers, employers and employees, stenographers and teachers and housewives—and almost without exception, as though it were a child's indiscretion, these community members found little fault with her and criticized as "puritanical" and "victorian" those who disapproved. "Let her live her own life," they said. "And why should we interfere with people's personal liberties?" In state and nation and across the seas, such toleration for sin is terrifying.

There is no shame. Isaiah again strikes at the sin:

The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. ([Isaiah 3:9](#).)

That the Church's stand on morality may be understood, we declare firmly and unalterably it is not an outworn garment, faded, old-fashioned, and threadbare. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and his covenants and doctrines are immutable; and when the sun grows cold and the stars no longer shine, the law of chastity will still be basic in God's world and in the Lord's church. Old values are upheld by the Church not because they are old, but rather because they are right.

Pure sex life in proper marriage is approved. There is a time and an appropriateness for all things that have value. But sexual encounters outside of legalized marriage render the individual a thing to be used, a thing to be exploited, and make him or her exchangeable, exploitable, expendable.

In our mass-production age, "we have witnessed the reduction of persons to things in a code number, a subscriber, a punched card. Each reduction indicates that the person is expendable, replaceable." This renders men functionaries and destroys their being and loses for them their self, dwarfed by a gigantic universe out there. This is hauntingly true as people are "used" to gratify physical passions in illegitimacy.

We really do not "love" things. We use things like doormats, automobiles, clothing, machines; but we love people by serving them and contributing to their permanent good.

And when we come before the great Judge at the bar of justice, shall we stand before him as a thing or as a person, as a depraved body of flesh and carnal acts or as a son of God standing straight and tall and worthy? And as we answer the vital questions, will we be able to say, "I builded, I did not tear down; I lifted, I did not pull down; I grew, I did not shrivel; I helped others grow, I did not dwarf them; I helped, I did not hinder; I loved intensely and blessed, I did not lust toward exploitation to injure"?

Like some high-pressure salesmen who claim far more for their product than can possibly be delivered, sex

exploitation promises what it can never produce nor deliver. So, outside of marriage, improper sex life can bring only disappointment, disgust, and usually rejection "while it propels its participants down the long corridor of repeated encounters which are destined to fail."

Very often the couple—the two people who have been promiscuous, who have been wanton, who have crossed the lines of propriety—become disgusted with one another and discontinue associations altogether. Many come to dislike, if not to hate, the partner in sin.

Illicit sex is a selfish act, a betrayal, and is dishonest. To be unwilling to accept responsibility is cowardly, disloyal. Marriage is for time and eternity. Fornication and all other deviations are for today, for the hour, for the "now." Marriage gives life. Fornication leads to death.

The young man is untrue to his manhood who promises popularity, good times, security, fun, and even love, when all he can give is passion and its diabolical fruits—guilt complexes, disgust, hatred, abhorrence, eventual loathing, and possible pregnancy without legitimacy and honor. He pleads his case in love and all he gives is lust. Likewise, the young lady sells herself cheap. The result is damage to life and canker to the soul.

The Reverend Lawrence Lowell Gruman says:

It is indeed a quaint morality that belittles sex and shrinks human beings to pleasure-seeking dwarfs, for if sex is good, as eating and sleeping are good, then it, too, has specific limits and an appropriate place and that place is within marriage.

And still these young people talk of love. What a corruption of the most beautiful term! The fruit is bitter because the tree is corrupt. Their lips say, "I love you." Their bodies say, "I want you." Love is kind and wholesome. To love is to give, not to take. To love is to serve, not to exploit.

Dr. Gruman says:

The sexual encounter ought to be a full and free affirmation of the other person, . . . a total commitment to him, and that spells permanence and permanence is spelled out in marriage. . . . If you love another person fully, wholly, unselfishly, then respect the sexual life of that person by surrounding him with marriage. Using and being used, we fail as human beings and sons of God.

What is love? Many people think of it as mere physical attraction and they casually speak of "falling in love" and "love at first sight." This may be Hollywood's version and the interpretation of those who write love songs and love fiction. True love is not wrapped in such flimsy material. One might become immediately attracted to another individual, but love is far more than physical attraction. It is deep, inclusive, and comprehensive. Physical attraction is only one of the many elements; there must be faith and confidence and understanding and partnership. There must be common ideals and standards. There must be great devotion and companionship. Love is cleanliness and progress and sacrifice and selflessness. This kind of love never tires or wanes, but lives through sickness and sorrow, poverty and privation, accomplishment and disappointment, time and eternity. For the love to continue, there must be an increase constantly of confidence and understanding, of frequent and sincere expression of appreciation and affection. There must be a forgetting of self and a constant concern for the other. Interests, hopes, objectives must be constantly focused into a single channel.

For many years, I saw a strong man carry his tiny, emaciated, arthritic wife to meetings and wherever she could go. There could be no sexual expression. Here was selfless indication of affection. I think that is pure love.

I saw a kindly woman wait on her husband for many years as he deteriorated with muscular dystrophy. She waited on him hand and foot, night and day, when all he could do was blink his eyes in thanks. I believe that was love.

If anyone feels that petting or other deviations are demonstrations of love, let him ask himself: "If this beautiful body that I have misused suddenly became deformed, or paralyzed, would my reactions be the same? If this lovely face were scarred by flames, or this body that I have used were to suddenly become rigid, would there still be love?" Answers to these questions might test one to see if he really is in love or if it is only physical attraction that has encouraged the improper physical contacts.

The young man who protects his sweetheart against all use or abuse, against insult and infamy from himself or others, could be expressing true love. But the young man who uses his companion as a biological toy to give himself temporary satisfaction—that is lust.

A young woman who conducts herself to be attractive spiritually, mentally, and physically but will not by word or dress or act stir or stimulate to physical reactions the companion beside her could be expressing true love. That young woman who must touch and stir and fondle and tempt and use exhibits lust and exploitation.

I have spoken frankly and boldly against the sins of the day. Even though I dislike such a subject, I believe it necessary to warn against the onslaught of the arch tempter who, with his army of emissaries and all the tools at his command, would destroy all the youth of Zion, largely through deception, misrepresentation, and lies.

Do not excuse petting and body intimacies. Remember what the Lord said:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. ([Matthew 5:27-28](#).)

Beware of the devil's trick of making evil seem good by giving it a label that conceals its character. Just such a device is the rationalization that lust is love.

And if there has been lust, repent of it and keep your minds clean, and convict yourself of serious evil if you permit your minds to dwell upon these forbidden things or your hands or bodies to yield to the call of lust.

Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God. ([Mormon 9:28](#).)
